

ENGL A243-001 American Masterworks
Mary A. McCay
Fall 2004

Office: Bobet 314

Office Hours: MWF: 10-12, TR: 8:30-9:20 and by appointment

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Course Goals and Objectives: This course will endeavor to give an overview of pre-1900 American Literature and to give a sense of the various trends, themes, ideas, and conflicts that the literature reveals. Student should be able to write clearly about the texts they read and to discuss major issues and questions posed by the texts.

Texts: Since American Masterworks, ENGL A243, is a survey to cover major canonical writing before 1900, I have chosen *The Norton Anthology of American Literature*, Sixth Edition Volumes A and B as the primary texts. Please buy these book; they are available in the bookstore.

Class Participation: This class will be a mixture of lecture and discussion, so you must do the reading on the syllabus for the date assigned. You must also bring your book to class everyday and be prepared to discuss the texts. I will ask specific questions about the assigned texts to generate discussion. You will begin the semester with 100 class participation points. If you are unprepared to discuss the readings, I will deduct 5 points from the 100 for class participation on that day. There are approximately 27 class periods; you may miss two with no penalty. After two absences, I will deduct 10 points from the 100 on the days you do not attend. Tardiness distracts other members of the class, so please be on time for class. If you are late, you will be marked absent, so make sure you notify the professor after class that you did arrive. Two late arrivals will count as an absence.

Course Requirements

1. Readings from the syllabus and class participation. The above note on Class Participation explains how I will arrive at a grade. This could be an easy A if you come to class prepared. One paper grade.
2. 750-word papers (2), topics and due dates attached. PLEASE SEE POLICY FOR LATE AND MAKE-UP WORK. One paper grade each.
3. Quizzes to generate and focus discussion. These will be unannounced, but you should expect one a week. One paper grade
4. One long paper (2000 words). Two paper grades.
5. Mid-semester in-class exam (bring two blue books). This exam will be both essay and identification. One paper grade.
6. Final exam (bring two blue books). This exam is scheduled for Tuesday, December 14, 11:30-1:30. Unless otherwise noted, it will be held in the classroom. This exam will be both essay and identification. One paper grade. **IF YOU HAVE MISSED NO MORE THAN TWO CLASSES AND HAVE AN "A" AVERAGE, YOU NEED NOT TAKE THE FINAL EXAM.**

All of the above assignments, except the long paper will be counted as one paper grade; the long paper will count as 2 paper grades. You will be evaluated on a total of 7 paper grades. If you have any questions about the grading system, please see me.

Extra Credit: I will post questions on the discussion board of Blackboard. If you answer the post before the class discussion, you will receive a point added to the final quiz grade. That way you can make up for low quiz grades.

POLICY ON LATE AND MAKE-UP WORK

1. Unannounced quizzes may not be made up. You may miss one without penalty as I will delete the lowest quiz grade. I will add all the quiz grades together at the end of the term and average them. You may add points to the quiz grade by answering Blackboard posts in a timely fashion.
2. Late papers may not receive an A. Because students who turn in their work on time are disadvantaged by those who take extra time, students who turn in papers late can only receive a B+, no matter how good their papers are. If work is more than three weeks late, C is the highest grade possible.
3. If you miss an announced exam, you must have a physician's excuse, and you may make up the exam within a week of returning to class.

IF YOU DO NOT UNDERSTAND THE LATE AND MAKE-UP POLICY OR ANYTHING ELSE ABOUT THIS SYLLABUS, PLEASE LET ME KNOW DURING THE FIRST WEEK OF CLASSES.

THE FIRST HALF OF THE COURSE IS IN **VOLUME A** OF THE NORTON ANTHOLOGY

Calendar:

Week 1: August 31-Sept 2: Introduction to the course. I will lecture; you should begin reading for week two.

Week 2: Sept. 7-9: William Bradford and Thomas Morton

T: William Bradford and the Plymouth Experience. Read all selections of *Of Plimoth Plantation*

R: Thomas Morton: Read all of *New English Cannan*

Week 3: Sept. 14-16: John Winthrop

T: John Winthrop: Read all selections and make special note of "A Model of Christian Charity."

R: NO CLASS, MASS OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

Week 4: September 21-23: Anne Bradstreet, Cotton Mather, and Jonathan Edwards

T: Read all selections from Anne Bradstreet and Michael Wigglesworth.

R: Read all selections of Cotton Mather and all selections of Jonathan Edwards.

Friday, September 24: Paper #1 due. It must be turned in at the English Office (Bobet 318) before noon. Make sure you sign it in and have the student worker put it in the correct mailbox (McCay).

Week 5: September 28-30: Benjamin Franklin

T: Benjamin Franklin: Read *The Way to Wealth*, "Rules by which a Great Empire May Be Reduced to a Small One," "Information to Those Who Would Remove to America," "Remarks Concerning the Savages of North America,"

R: Read all selections from *The Autobiography*.

Week 6: October 5-7: Thomas Jefferson, John and Abigail Adams

T. Read all selections from Thomas Jefferson and John and Abigail Adams

R. Mid-semester Examination. Bring two blue books to class. This exam will cover all the work we have done to date.

THE SECOND PART OF THE COURSE IS IN **VOLUME B** OF THE NORTON ANTHOLOGY

Week 7: October 12-14: Introduction to Romantic Fiction: Washington Irving and James Fenimore Cooper.

T: Read "Rip Van Winkle" and "The Legend of Sleepy Hollow."

R: Read all selections from James Fenimore Cooper

Week 8: October 19-21: Edgar Allan Poe

T: E.A. Poe: Read all the poetry

R: E.A. Poe, Read "The Fall of the House of Usher," "The Masque of the Red Death," and "The Purloined Letter." I will discuss "The Philosophy of Composition."

Week 9: October 26-28: Nathaniel Hawthorne

T: Nathaniel Hawthorne: "Young Goodman Brown," "The Minister's Black Veil,"

R: Read "The Maypole of Marymount," "The Birthmark," and "Rappaccini's Daughter."

Week 10: November 2-4: Herman Melville

T: "Hawthorne and His Mosses," "Bartelby the Scrivener."

R: "Benito Cereno."

Friday, November 5: Paper # 2 due in the English department Office, Bobet 318, by noon. Make sure you sign it in, and have the office worker put it in my mailbox.

Week 11: November 9-11: Emerson and Thoreau

T: "Nature," "Self Reliance," and "The American Scholar." Also look at the letter to Walter Whitman: "The Wonderful Gift of *Leaves of Grass*.
R: "Resistance to Civil Government."

Week 12: November 16-18: Margaret Fuller and Harriet Beecher Stowe,

T: Read all selections from Margaret Fuller.

R: Read all selections from Harriet Beecher Stowe.

November 23: No class

Week 13: November 30- December 2: Harriet Jacobs and Frederick Douglass

T: Read all selections from Harriet Jacobs.

R: Read all selections from Frederick Douglass.

Week 14: December 7-9: Walt Whitman and Emily Dickinson.

T: Read Preface to *Leaves of Grass*, *Leaves of Grass* (1855) *Song of Myself* (1881), "When Lilacs Last in the Dooryard Bloom'd."

R: Emily Dickinson: Read all selections. You will be asked to write a 15-minute piece on the poem you like the most.

F: Long paper due. See topics. This paper requires that you read a long selection that we have not discussed in class. This paper is due on Friday, December 10, and must be turned in to the English department office, Bobet 318. You must sign it in and have it put in my mailbox.

Final Examination: Tuesday, December 14, 11:30-1:30. It will be given in the classroom unless otherwise designated. Please bring two blue books. For the final, you will be given identification questions on the second part of the course (worth 30 points), one essay question on some of the texts we have studied during the second part of the course (40 points)